

J. ERNEST KENNEY
EUGENE MAR
RICILARD E. FICHTER
THOMAS J. MOORE
JOSEPH DEBENEDECTIS*
BENJAMIN E. URCIA*
WONKI PARK*
JUSTIN J. CASSELL

LAW OFFICES
BACON & THOMAS, PLLC
625 SLATERS LANE - FOURTH FLOOR
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314-1176
U.S.A.

TELEPHONE
(703) 683-0500

FACSIMILE
(703) 683-1080
(703) 683-0884

GEORGE CHUNG CHIN CHEN:

* BAR OTHER THAN VA.
‡ REG. PATENT AGENT

E-Mail
mail@baconthomas.com

FACSIMILE COMMUNICATION

To: Examiner Kimberly Nguyen
Fax #: (703) 746-8595
Re: U.S. Patent Application 09/718,473
From: Justin Cassell
Total pages: 4

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UNOFFICIAL COMMUNICATION

Message:

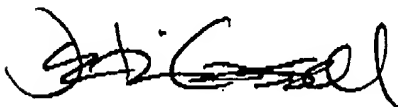
Dear Examiner Nguyen,

Thank you for taking the time to review the proposed amendments to the claims in the above-application. As you will see, claims 1 and 7 have been amended to recite that the separator card and the at least one information carrier are "separate from one another." As discussed over the phone, these amendments are provided in response to your comments in the Office Action which indicated that while we distinguished the above-application over the prior art on the basis that the separator card and the information carriers are separate from one another, the claims did not explicitly recite such a limitation.

Furthermore, it is proposed to amend claims 2-6 and 8-13 to remove the reference characters therefrom used to denote the separator card and the information carrier.

I look forward to receiving your comments regarding the proposed claim amendments.

Sincerely,



Justin Cassell
(703) 683-0500

Application No. 09/718,473

Examiner: K. NGUYEN

Art Unit: 2876

UNOFFICIAL COMMUNICATION**PROPOSED AMENDED CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) A method for processing sheet material in different successively processed groups, comprising the following method steps:

separating the different groups of sheet material, and

processing the separate groups of sheet material,

wherein a separator card ~~(TK)~~ is used for separating the different groups of sheet material, and at least one information carrier ~~(HK)~~ is used for processing the different groups of sheet material;

wherein the separator card and the at least one information carrier are separate from one another.

2. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the information carrier ~~(HK)~~ is/are inserted at any points within the different groups of sheet material.

3. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the separator card ~~(TK)~~ is inserted at the beginning of each different group of sheet material, and the information carrier ~~(HK)~~ is inserted at the end of each different group of sheet material.

4. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1 or 3, wherein subgroups of sheet material are formed by using a plurality of information carriers ~~(HK)~~ within a group of sheet material.

5. (Currently Amended) A method according to any one of claims 1, 2 or 3, wherein the separator card ~~(TK)~~ and the information carrier ~~(HK)~~ are brought together with the groups of sheet material at different places.

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Art Unit: 2876

6. (Currently Amended) A method according to any one of claims 1, 2 or 3, wherein a deliverer of one or more groups of sheet material provides the information carrier ~~(#K)~~ with information.

7. (Currently Amended) Means for separating and processing different groups of sheet material in a sheet processing device, the means comprising;

at least one separator card ~~(TK)~~ arranged to provide an indication of a separate group of sheet material to the sheet processing device; and

at least one information carrier ~~(#K)~~ arranged to provide information to the sheet processing device concerning a group of sheet material;

wherein the at least one separator card and the at least one information carrier are separate from one another.

8. (Currently Amended) Means according to claim 7, wherein the separator card ~~(TK)~~ and/or the information carrier ~~(#K)~~ are coded.

9. (Currently Amended) Means according to claim 8, wherein the coding of the separator card ~~(TK)~~ and/or the information carrier ~~(#K)~~ comprise a magnetic and/or optical and/or electric and/or electronic coding.

10. (Currently Amended) Means according to one of claims 7 to 9, wherein the at least one information carrier ~~(#K)~~ is/are formed by part of the sheet material.

11. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 4, wherein the separator card ~~(TK)~~ and the information carrier ~~(#K)~~ are brought together with the groups of sheet material at different places.

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12. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 4, wherein a deliverer of one or more groups of sheet material provides the information carrier ~~(#K)~~ with information.

13. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 5, wherein a deliverer of one or more groups of sheet material provides the information carrier ~~(#K)~~ with information.

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